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becoming subject to absolute princes, either elected by the people, who flew to despotism as a refuge from anarchy, or exalted into dominion by intrigue and arms. These new masters of governments, which before were popular, displayed an unbounded profusion of luxury, that they might intimidate their enemies, and retain the respect of their friends by the show of power, and still more, that they might divest the minds of their freeborn subjects from the galling sense of subjection. The magnificence of the Estensi, the Gonzaghi, the Carraresi, the Scaligeri, and the Visconti, was nothing but the *panis et circenses*, with which Augustus amused the turbulent populace of Rome.

ART. V.—*The Natural History of the Bible ; or a Description of all the Quadrupeds, Birds, Fishes, Reptiles, and Insects, Trees, Plants, Flowers, Gums, and Precious Stones, mentioned in the Sacred Scriptures. Collected from the best Authorities, and alphabetically arranged.*
By THADDEUS MASON HARRIS, D. D. Boston. Wells & Lilly. 1820. 8vo. pp. 476.

AT the time when our common English version of the Bible was made, Sacred Geography, and the Natural History of Palestine, and, in general, of the countries with which the authors of the different sacred writings were acquainted, were in a very imperfect state ; much more so than at present. Hence it was, that the translators frequently rendered the names of places and of natural objects with great uncertainty ; and sometimes did not translate them at all, except by writing them in English letters. ‘ There be many words,’ they say, in their Preface to the reader, ‘ which be never found in the Scriptures but once, having neither brother nor neighbor, as the Hebrews speak, so that we cannot be holpen by conference of places. Again, there be many rare names of certain birds, beasts, and precious stones, &c. concerning which the Hebrews themselves are so divided among themselves for judgment, that they may seem to have defined this or that, rather because they would say something, than be-

cause they were sure of that which they said, as St Hierome somewhere saith of the Septuagint.' Indeed, the Hebrew Rabbinical writers are, in general, very unsafe guides. Their works are too often filled with idle vagaries, which mislead the credulous, and make us willing that the modern commentator should divine a meaning for himself, be the chance ever so little of his divining rightly.

Since the English translation of the Bible, now in general use, was completed, much has been done to ascertain the natural history of that part of the world, which was known to the Hebrews, in order to illustrate their sacred writings. Still the common reader of his English Bible believes, that *Whale* means *Whale*, and *Behemoth* and *Leviathan* mean anything, which presents itself to their imagination. And what, at first sight, seems remarkable in this case is, that the more the knowledge of all subjects subsidiary to the illustration of the Sacred Scriptures has advanced, the greater is the general prejudice against a new translation of them. But we have no intention of examining the merits of this subject. Our present purpose is to speak of some of the more distinguished writers mentioned by Dr Harris, from whom every one, who would thoroughly examine the Natural History of the Bible, must select his materials.

In regard to the Botanical part, Dr Harris names, as his primary authorities, Hiller and Celsius, the latter of whom is spoken of with great respect by Linnæus, as the most consummate *Polyhistor* of his age. Though this friend and patron of Linnæus devoted a great part of a long life to the illustration of the plants mentioned in the Scriptures, yet he did it under so many disadvantages, that Linnæus, in the interval between the publication of the first and second volumes of the *Hierobotanicon* of Celsius, (1745—1752) mentioned a *Flora Palæstina* as among the *desiderata*; and declared that whoever should visit the Holy Land, and make a collection of the plants of Palestine, would be immortalised by theologians. Stimulated by these remarks, which fell from Linnæus in one of his lectures, Hasselquist, then a student of medicine, bent all his efforts to the accomplishment of the great and difficult undertaking. Having already made great advances in Natural History, he studied the Arabic language, and with much difficulty and delay procured scanty pecuniary

means for his expedition. When he arrived at Smyrna, says Linnæus, he was treated with the utmost hospitality by the Consul General, who sent him to Egypt, and having remained at Cairo about a year, he pursued his travels through Arabia and Palestine, diligently collecting all the plants he could find, and describing the animals and stones which he met with. After his return to Smyrna, he died of the disease under which he had long labored, and his creditors took possession of his manuscripts and collections. The Queen of Sweden redeemed them, and directed Linnæus to arrange and publish the writings of Hasselquist, at the same time giving to him specimens of all the plants of which she had duplicates. Of these Linnæus gave an account in his *Flora Palæstina*, to which he added a few that were collected by Poccoke, Rauwolf, and Shaw.

Bruce, whose reputation as an authority has, contrary to that of some travellers, increased with the increasing knowledge obtained of the countries which he visited, contributed considerably to the stock of information concerning the Natural History of the Bible. Preparatory to his great expedition, he studied the Oriental Languages at Algiers, with great zeal and diligence; and from a knowledge of the original languages of the Scriptures, he claims an advantage over previous travellers in the East, who were either not at all, or but very superficially acquainted with those languages. He made it a rule also, in describing plants and animals which he saw, to prefer those mentioned in Scripture, particularly where doubts had arisen among translators and commentators. To these authorities on the subject of Plants, Dr Harris adds Dioscorides and Pliny, among the ancients, and Alpinus, Rauwolf, Shaw, Russell, Forskal, and others, among the moderns.

The author's leading authority concerning the Animals mentioned in Scripture is Bochart, a learned orientalist of the seventeenth century. His *Hieroicoicon*, which, as its name imports, relates to the animals spoken of in the sacred writings, was printed at London in 1663. Great accessions have been made to this department of knowledge since that period, giving certainty to what was doubtful, and correcting what was erroneous; yet it seems, for the most part, that the opinions of this indefatigable scholar are confirmed by the

testimony of the most learned and intelligent travellers since the period in which he wrote. Dr Harris, though one might apprehend from his preface, that he had relied too unhesitatingly on Bochart, is not wanting in the examination of subsequent authorities, and giving them their due weight in coming to his own decisions.

Another authority, confined to no particular department of the Natural History of the Bible, is J. J. Scheuchzer, who died in 1731. His great work, entitled in the French translation *Physique Sacrée*, embraces a wide range of inquiry and speculation, not only concerning the Natural History of the Bible, but everything remarkable in the works of art. He professed 'to have sought the true sense of Hebrew, Chaldee, Arabic or Greek words, pertaining to the subjects of his inquiries; to have collected from travellers, who have written concerning natural history, geography, botany, animals, and fossils, whatever regards the nature of the Oriental climate, constitution of their inhabitants, plants, animals, and minerals; and to have examined, with much labor, the names given by the Turks, Arabs, Persians, and other nations of the East, to different things, which compose natural history.' It may be supposed, that in eight folio volumes on the subjects above enumerated, there would be enough, and more than enough, both of that which depends on evidence, and of that which is merely theoretical; but to an author, who knows how to separate the wheat from the chaff, superfluity, though often troublesome, does not produce loathing or disgust. It was, we presume, by such a spirit of patient inquiry, that Dr Harris was enabled to endure the strange vagaries of Parkhurst, for the sake of what so fearless a theorist might sometimes, even by his boldness, contribute towards probability and truth. One, who compares and judges for himself, may be trusted, where it would be unsafe for the mere novice or the credulous student to venture.

Of Scheuchzer, whom we have already mentioned, Dr Harris has made principal use for determining the serpents and insects mentioned in Scripture. Rudbeck is his principal authority for the fishes, and Lemnius and Braunius for the minerals and precious stones.

In the use he has made of the authors above mentioned,

and of various others, which such a distinguished bibliographer was naturally led to consult, Dr Harris manifests a due discrimination, and puts it in the reader's power generally, in cases of doubt, to weigh the evidence for himself. Fully persuaded, therefore, as we are of the author's fidelity, and of his competency to the work, to the completion of which his favorite studies have long been directed, the most important question remaining regards the necessity or utility of such a work.

We are always pleased to see works on subjects of common interest, comprising in a small compass, what before could not be found without access to voluminous authors and extensive libraries. The benefit extends beyond common readers; for scholars are often glad to be saved the labor of examining a multitude of writers, by one who has already gone through the process, or at least to be referred to original sources. The work before us is limited in its object, and without being prolix is generally sufficiently full. We know not of any other book on the same plan; and it is not rendered superfluous by late English translations of separate books of the Sacred Writings, or by running commentaries on the same. Such translations are not generally known or read, and popular commentaries and notes are not remarkable for settling difficulties, or teaching clearly what is imperfectly known. Calmet's *Dictionary of the Bible*, which grew out of his massy Commentaries, with all its reduction in the latest English edition, is still voluminous and expensive. It contains, as it ought, a great variety of matter, and sometimes what might well be spared. What pertains to Natural History forms only a proportional part, and is not always distinguished by the good judgment of its author. Lamy, in his *Introduction to the Scriptures*, devotes a part of it to Natural History. He professes to speak of those Animals, which are not sufficiently known, and of which it is necessary we should know some of the properties, before we can understand what the Scripture says of them. In the same manner also he speaks of what is embraced in the other branches of Natural History. But as the author's plan was not limited to this part of the contents of the Bible, we are obliged to look for what relates to it among other matter, and do not find it always so fully and satisfactorily treated as could be desired.

Dr Harris is entitled to the thanks of the public, for having brought within a reasonable compass the most valuable materials on the subjects of which he treats; for having arranged them in a convenient method; and, in general, for having arrived at his own conclusions, on the best evidence which the subjects admit.

In order fully to understand the Sacred Writings, a knowledge of whatever is local and peculiar becomes important. Not the least important, as contributing to the illustration of Scripture, is Natural History. The poetical books of the Hebrews, in particular, abound in lively comparisons, local allusions, and strong metaphors, drawn from material objects, whose most powerful charms arise from their individuality. The real import of the sentiment, expressed by such allusions and metaphors, must be gathered from a knowledge of the objects on which they are founded. Much of the poetry of the Hebrews, like that of every people of a remote age, partakes largely of the pastoral kind, resulting from the personal occupation of the authors, or the common condition of mankind. David was called from feeding his father's flocks to receive the royal unction, and afterwards returned to his accustomed pursuits. To enjoy the beauty of the pastoral scenery, which is so often alluded to in the Hebrew Scriptures, one should have some knowledge of the climate and natural productions of the country which furnishes it; and everything which tends to make the sacred Scriptures more engaging to the mass of readers, by illustrating what is obscure, is a great good. 'These illustrations,' says Dr Johnson, 'though they do not immediately rectify the faith, or refine the morals of the reader, yet are by no means to be considered as superfluous niceties or useless speculations; for they often show some propriety of allusion utterly undiscoverable by readers not skilled in the natural history of the East; and are often of more important use, as they remove some difficulty from narratives, or some obscurity from precepts.'

We have no disposition to discover any faults in a work, which is so far generally well performed; but some of our learned readers might think, that we have examined it very carelessly or superficially, should we omit to mention them.

The author gives the Hebrew names in the letters of the Hebrew language, under the English names, which latter are

arranged in alphabetical order. If it be important that the former should be given at all, and it is important to one who has any acquaintance with the language, great care should be taken to secure accuracy. But we regret to find such a want of accuracy in the printing of the Hebrew names, as to lead us to suppose, that the author exercised a too cursory revision of the press in this particular, where he alone must be responsible. There are also some inaccuracies in referring to passages of Scripture ; a kind of fault which is well known to be very trying to a scholar's patience.

Another fault, somewhat connected with the one first mentioned, is a want of consistency in the writing of the Hebrew words in English letters. This fault pervades the whole work ; and though it does not seem in itself very important, yet as the author is not, and therefore does not wish to be thought, a mere compiler, it belonged to him to preserve uniformity and consistency with himself.

On the whole, however, we cheerfully recommend the work both to the learned and the unlearned reader, as containing about all that can be known on the subjects which successively occur. Many of the articles will be read with great interest ; and in those in which curiosity is most concerned, the author, in a form as much abridged as their nature would admit, has exhausted all the learning of naturalists and travellers, and, as we believe, has generally come to the right results.

ART. VI.—*Memorable Days in America, being a Journal of a Tour to the United States, principally undertaken to ascertain by positive Evidence the Condition and probable Prospects of British Emigrants ; including Accounts of Mr Birkbeck's Settlement in the Illinois ; and intended to show Men and Things as they are in America.* By W. FAUX, an English Farmer. London.

THIS work reached us shortly after its publication in London, but we turned from it as beneath notice. We treated it, as we have generally done the Fearons, the Jansons, the Hewlets, and the various other paltry adventurers, who come